

CORPORATE STRATEGY TO 2010 AND CORPORATE &  
OPERATIONAL PLAN 2006-09: 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER PROGRESS  
REPORT

**DISCLOSABLE**

Meeting  
26/01/07

Agenda Item  
17

Reference No  
HEFCW/07/11

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1 This paper presents to Council a third quarter (October – December) progress report on its *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2006-07 to 2008-09*.

## BACKGROUND

- 2 Council has agreed to receive quarterly progress reports against the Plan focussing on Year 1 activities (the Operational Plan), but also including progress updates against Year 2 and Year 3 actions as appropriate.

## PROGRESS REPORT AGAINST ACTIONS IDENTIFIED FOR THE PLANNING PERIOD 2006-07 TO 2008-09

- 3 Section 5 of the Plan identifies a number of specific actions for each year of the planning period, FYs 2006-07 to 2008-09. Deliverables identified for Year 1 describe the Council's Operational Plan for 2006-07 and incorporate the specific requirements included within the 2006-07 Remit Letter from the Welsh Assembly Government.
- 4 The table at **Annex A** provides a progress update against the 46 actions identified for Year 1, the Operational Plan for 2006-07. The key points are:
  - The 13 tasks identified for the third quarter (October – December 2006 inclusive) of 2006-07 have, on the whole, been completed to schedule. However, the 'Progress Update' column at Annex A indicates that the following activities have been delayed slightly:
    - Research into market for Foundation Degrees: work delayed due to staffing issues; concerns regarding the remit for the work; and awaiting the outcome of work being carried out in England. Extension sought from the Assembly for submission of advice from December 2006 to March 2007. Also, will now take account of Leitch *Review of Skills* published December 2006.
    - SIS and Fee Plans: One SIS Plan still to be approved and still awaiting responses to feedback provided to a number of institutions regarding their Fee Plans.
    - Report on institutions' latest estates strategies and condition surveys: delayed to March 2007 due to a number of late submissions.
    - Review of institutional race equality policies: underway to revised timetable, with final reports from consultants due by end January 2007.
  - For the most part, actions identified for the remainder of 006-07 are on schedule at this stage. However, potential issues/concerns have been flagged with respect to:

- HEFCW representation and involvement in the context of 'bedding down' of the ASPB merger process in the Assembly [also flagged as an issue in the first and second quarter reports to Council].
  - Review of customer service standards against *Delivering the Connections*: still awaiting the detailed standards, guidance and good practice advice to be issued by the Assembly.
- 5 Actions identified for Year 2 (2007-08) and Year 3 (2008-09) have been brought forward, as appropriate, to the next iteration of the Plan, which covers the period 2007-10. Council considered an the initial draft of the 2007-10 Plan at its meeting on 8 December, and a further update on progress is given in the Chief Executive's Report (HEFCW/07/CE1 refers).

***Council is invited to note progress against actions in the Operational Plan 2006-07 at Annex A***

#### REPORTING AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 6 Progress against the Council's *Corporate Strategy and Corporate Plan & Operational Plan*, and against its corporate risk register, is monitored and reported via:
- The annual monitoring meeting between the ELL Minister, Chair and Chief Executive (usually each October)
  - Annual 'Scrutiny visits' by the ELL Committee (at the Committee's discretion)
  - Quarterly monitoring meetings with Welsh Assembly Government officials from HEFCW's sponsoring division (arranged by the Assembly)
  - Quarterly progress and monitoring reviews by Management Board
  - Quarterly progress reports to Council (at its meetings in July, October, January and March)
  - Reviews of the corporate risk register by Management Board and at each meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee (normally held in March, June and October)

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7 The Council's *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2006-09* is based on grant-in-aid allocations confirmed in the latest National Assembly for Wales' budgets. Details of the Assembly's approved final budget proposals for the financial year 2006-07 and indicative proposals for 2007-08 and 2008-09, and also of the Council's budget commitments for the academic year 2006/07, are set out at Annex B to the Plan.

#### PUBLICITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8 Following Assembly approval, the Plan has been translated into Welsh and published on the HEFCW. Printed copies currently are being finalised with the Council's designers and printers.

#### RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9 If Council did not regularly review and monitor progress against its Corporate Strategy / Corporate Plan/ Operational Plan it would have no assurance that it was on track to meet its high level targets and objectives. The monitoring arrangements set out at paragraph 6 above are intended to address this.

## DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10 The Plan includes reference to the key *Making the Connections* themes of equality and social justice. It also includes various activities planned by the Council which relate to the themes of diversity and equal opportunities, including:
- Increasing new entrants to HE from Communities First areas, and general support for widening access
  - Introduction of collaborative disability support arrangements for the sector
  - Support for Welsh language provision in the HE sector
  - Review of institutions' race equality policies
  - Support for sector work on equal pay
  - Implementation of HEFCW's Welsh Language Scheme and Welsh Language Mainstreaming Strategy
  - Review of HEFCW's Race Equality Scheme

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11 The Council is invited to note progress to date against actions for the planning period 2006-09.

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